

Questions	Answers	Sources
<p>1. What is the definition of a school outbreak?</p>	<p>The local public health unit (PHU) is responsible for determining if an outbreak exists, declaring an outbreak, and providing direction on outbreak control measures to be implemented. The outbreak case definition is listed below. However, even though an outbreak may be declared in the school, the public health unit will assist in determining which cohort(s) may be sent home or if a partial or full school closure is required based on the scope of the outbreak.</p> <p>An outbreak in a school is defined as two or more lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in students and/or staff (or other visitors) in a school with an epidemiological link (i.e. exposure to a confirmed case, or has had the same exposure as a confirmed case), within a 14-day period, where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection* in the school (including transportation and before/after school care).</p> <p>*Examples of reasonably having acquired infection in school include: No obvious source of infection outside of the school setting; OR Known exposure in the school setting</p>	<p>Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: School Outbreak Management Version 1 – August 26, 2020</p>
<p>2. What are the testing recommendations to families with children at a school outbreak?</p>	<p>Symptomatic children and family members with epidemiological links (i.e. exposure to a confirmed case, or has had the same exposure as a confirmed case) to a case are encouraged to undergo testing in accordance with public health recommendations.</p> <p>Testing is voluntary. Symptomatic contacts with epidemiological links to a case or dismissed cohort should be strongly encouraged to get tested.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: School Outbreak Management Version 1 – August 26, 2020</p>

	A negative test does not reduce the 14-day self-isolation period from last exposure for those self-isolating. Contacts should be re-tested if they develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19 during self-isolation.	
3. Where should parents bring children for testing? Do all assessment centres swab children?	<p>In Toronto all assessment centres will test school aged, parents can bring children to Toronto Region COVID-19 Assessment Centre – to find out more please visit: https://covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations/</p> <p>All assessment centres are able to test school-aged children and are mapped to a corresponding school based on proximity. If directed to undergo testing, parents will be provided with a recommended assessment centre that will consider proximity and capacity of the assessment centre.</p>	Toronto Region COVID-19 Assessment Centers
4. Should children with any COVID symptoms be tested? (Fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and/or difficulty swallowing)	For children with symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, keep them at home. Call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000, your health care provider, or an assessment centre for testing. Children can often get a throat swab or swab in the front of their nose (instead of at the back of the nose), so the test will not be uncomfortable.	TPH Preparing for School During COVID 19
5. If a child’s COVID results are negative, but they are still symptomatic, can they return to school?	If the child has no known high-risk exposure and has not been advised by the PHU or health care provider to self-isolate they may return to school when symptoms are resolved for at least 24 hours. Note: Mild symptoms known to persist in young children (e.g., runny nose) may be ongoing at time of return to school if other symptoms have been resolved and there is a negative test.	Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: School Outbreak Management Version 1 – August 26, 2020
6. How many masks should I send my child to school with?	Send your child to school with two bags for masks, one labelled “clean” and one “dirty.” Pack several masks each day. Instruct your child to put their mask in the “dirty” bag if it gets wet or soiled,	TPH Preparing for School During COVID 19

	and to use a new, clean mask. Wash the masks at the end of each day for reuse.	
7. What happens if my child is non-compliant about following the rules around mask wearing etc.	It is important that your child wear a mask in school, particularly if they are unable to maintain a physical distance. There will be reasonable exceptions for those who are unable to do so for medical reasons. Schools and school boards are to develop policies and procedures on mask use. Please check with your child's schools	COVID-19: reopening schools
8. What happens if a child in the class gets sick – will I have to keep all of my children home?	If someone at school contracts COVID-19, Toronto Public health (TPH) will conduct an investigation to determine who had close contact with the individual. Public health will then contact each person who had close contact. Due to privacy of personal health information, the name of the person who has COVID-19 will not be shared. Care must be taken to avoid stigmatizing students and staff. Schools should continue to be welcoming, respectful, inclusive and supportive environments for all.	TPH Preparing for School During COVID 19
9. How are schools going to handle breaks and lots of children being in the hallways at the same time?	Schools and school boards have been asked to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide visual cues/guides on floors or sidewalks and signs and posters on walls to guide appropriate distances in lines/queues at all times. • Stagger periods of student movement and common activities (e.g. lunches, recess) around the school and discourage students congregating in the hallways • Encourage the use of stairs, when possible. Where required, elevator use should be limited to where can maintain a safe distance 	TPH COVID-19 Guidance for Re-Opening Non-Publically Funded Schools
10. Should families maintain their social circles once school starts?	Children in schools will be part of a cohort (or dedicated group) of students, which is different from a social circle	TPH Preparing for School During COVID 19

	<p>In a cohort, students should still practice physical distancing as much as possible, and wear a mask when they are indoors and also outdoors when physical distancing is not possible.</p> <p>In a social circle households can have up to 10 people in their circle with whom they can interact without keeping a physical distance or wearing masks.</p> <p>Families that have people who are at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 in their social circle should re-evaluate their social circle based on their own risk assessment.</p>	
<p>11. Will students and staff be required to get a COVID-19 test prior to the first day of school?</p>	<p>Students and staff will not be required to go for COVID-19 testing prior to the first day of school unless they have been advised to do so by a Public Health Unit or a Health Care Provider, (ie if they are symptomatic or a close contact of a positive case.)If they are symptomatic they should contact their health care provider and not attend the school setting.</p>	<p>COVID-19: reopening schools</p>
<p>12. What is the appropriate cleaning schedule for common areas and bathrooms in schools?</p>	<p>Toronto Public Health recommends frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and shared objects (e.g. doorknobs, water fountain knobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, electronic devices, tabletops) at least twice a day and when visibly dirty.</p>	<p>TPH COVID-19 Prevention Checklist for Schools JK to Grade 12</p>
<p>13. How will parents be informed of school closures and/or outbreaks?</p>	<p>All school boards will be asked to create a COVID-19 advisory section on their website. Where individual schools have websites, they will also be asked to create a COVID-19 advisory section. School boards and schools will be asked to post information if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 that involves a student or a staff member in a school setting.</p> <p>Students or staff members may withdraw from school if a family or household member has a confirmed case of COVID-19 but information will not be posted in these instances.</p>	<p>Operational guidance: COVID-19 management in schools</p> <p>Last updated: August 25, 2020</p>

	<p>In the interests of privacy, information provided to school communities will not identify the student or staff member that has received a positive COVID-19 test.</p> <p>If public health advises that a class, cohort or a school should be closed for a period of time, parents, students and staff will be notified immediately.</p>	
<p>14. As a parent, if I become sick, will I need to keep my child home from school? If yes, will they be able to attend virtual school?</p>	<p>Household members and others who live with the individual who has tested positive should isolate for 14 days.</p> <p>Schools should have necessary arrangements in place to support continuity of education for students who require isolation.</p>	<p>Operational guidance: COVID-19 management in schools Last updated: August 25, 2020</p>
<p>15. What are appropriate exemptions for mask wearing? Do I need to have a doctor’s note to be exempt?</p>	<p>Schools and school boards are to develop policies and procedures on mask use. Please check with your child's schools. Doctor’s notes are not required.</p>	<p>COVID-19: reopening schools</p>

Parent/Caregiver Resources:

[PHO’s Self-isolation: Guide for caregivers, household members and close contacts](#)

[PHO’s How to self-isolate](#)

[PHO’s Cleaning and disinfecting public settings factsheet](#)

[PHO’s What you should know about being tested for COVID 19](#)

[TPH’s COVID 19 Factsheet](#)

[TPH’s How to Wear a Cloth Mask](#)

[TPH How to Wear a Cloth Mask Safely](#)

[TPH’s COVID 19 Screening Poster](#)

[TPH’s Preparing for School During COVID 19](#)

[Holland Bloorview's FAMILY TIPSHEET: Explaining COVID-19 and Coronavirus to children](#)

Sick Kids Resources:

[How to talk to your child about COVID-19](#)

[Coping with separation from family and friends during COVID-19](#)

[Is my child or adolescent feeling stressed about COVID-19?](#)

[COVID-19: Information for parents of immunocompromised children and children with chronic medical conditions](#)

[Supporting your child with a neurodevelopmental disorder through the COVID-19 crisis](#)

[COVID-19: Information for parents of children with congenital heart disease](#)

[Dr. Ronni helps TVO's Dr. Cheddar answer kids' questions about COVID-19](#)

[For Kids \(video\): What is personal protective equipment \(PPE\)?](#)

[For Kids \(video\): What is physical distancing?](#)

[For Kids \(video\): What is a nasal swab?](#)